

**CONNERSVILLE, IN** - Congressman Pence held a town hall meeting in Connersville today:

The *Connersville News-Examiner* was there and reported on the meeting:



## Unhealthy idea: Pence, FRHS head say 'no' to plan

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More than 100 residents attended a town hall meeting on Friday where the main topic was the health care reform debate in Washington.

Fayette Regional Health System's CEO Randy White hosted the meeting at the John Miller Community Center where U.S. Rep. Mike Pence was the main speaker. White said the legislation needs to be stopped.

"I'm very worried about what's in this bill: there is nothing in the bill about tort reform; nothing in this bill about profiteering going on in health care; not much in this health care bill but bureaucracy," he said. "The hospital over a period of decades will deteriorate because the money will not be there to replenish it (with the bill)."

He said the hospital is barely in the black now and the proposal before congress would increase costs.

Pence, R-Columbus, said he has found growing dislike for the health care reform bill during a series of town hall meetings he has conducted across this eastern Indiana district in recent days.

"I was struck in New Castle (earlier Friday) about the overwhelming opposition; I was struck by the opposition here," he said. "My sense was that Republicans, independents and Democrats here know what we're looking at and don't want it."

Pence said the bill does not have enough votes to pass or he would have been in Washington instead of at town hall meetings. He was scheduled to conduct another meeting today in Richmond.

He offered three proposals to reduce cost:

--Allow individuals to purchase insurance across state lines, with the individual - not state government - choosing what to include in the policy. A Democratic congressman from Oregon has made that proposal but House leadership has not included it in the current bill.

--Tort reform similar to medical malpractice reform that would cap non-economic damages. Doctors would no longer feel a need to practice defensive medicine and order costly extra tests for liability purposes, Pence said.

-- Using money saved through tort reforms, states could lower the cost of guaranteed health insurance programs for people with pre-existing conditions.

"We can't get to any of this unless we stop the bill in congress," he said.

The House is considering a Senate-passed bill which contains the so-called Cornhusker Kickback and Louisiana Purchase deals to gain the votes of senators from Nebraska and Louisiana. Through subsidies, the Senate bill provides public funding for abortion, Pence said.

At the current rate, Medicare will be broke in 2015 with Medicaid going broke a few years later, he said. Promises made by these programs to seniors and citizens in need should be kept before government expands into new programs, he said.

"The day after we stop this on the House floor, I promise you I will pull my sleeves up and go after this and restart the process to get something done in a bipartisan manner," Pence said.

The congressman also addressed other issues.

National debt: He and another congressman have introduced a constitutional amendment to hold spending to the historical average of 20 percent of the gross domestic product. Currently, the federal government spends close to 25 percent of GDP and that number is climbing, he said.

Corporate taxes: To slow the exit from America by corporations, Pence favors cutting corporate taxes and lowering or eliminating the capital gains tax.

"Trade means jobs," he said. "Jack Kemp said 'What you tax, you get less of, and what you subsidize, you get more of.' Right now we are taxing capital formation. We are taxing indigenous American business and in a real sense creating every incentive for you to make it somewhere else and sell it here. Our policy should be 'Make it here' and make it more attractive

for businesses to keep the fruits of their labor."

China's growth: China is becoming more troubling all the time because it is growing militarily and it owns much of the debt of the United States, he said. China's efforts are not in the interest of freedom.

Earmarks: After the meeting, Pence said the Republican House Caucus had voted Thursday to stop requesting earmarks for one year as an effort to stop the growth of government.

Pence has not requested earmarks for two years.

"It results in waste, fraud, corruption and it catalyzes runaway federal spending," he explained. "Earmarks become the catalysts for legislation to be passed that wouldn't be passed without them. Earmarks only represent 1 percent of the budget, but if you have been in the building and see how it works, earmarks become the gateway drug to massive overspending at the federal level."